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Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Cuba: draft resolution

Special Committee decision of 12 July 2000 concerning Puerto Rico

The Special Committee,

Bearing in mind the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, contained in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, as well as the resolutions and decisions of the Special Committee concerning Puerto Rico,

Considering that the decade of the 1990s, was proclaimed by the General Assembly, in its resolution 43/47 of 22 November 1988, as the Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, and that under resolution 55/146 of 8 December 2000, the General Assembly declared the period 2001-2010 the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism,

Bearing in mind the nineteen resolutions and decisions adopted by the Special Committee on the question of Puerto Rico, contained in the reports of the Special Committee to the General Assembly,

Recalling that 25 July 2001 marks the one hundred and third anniversary of the intervention in Puerto Rico by the United States of America,

Further recalling the diverse initiatives taken by the political representatives of Puerto Rico and the United States in recent years, which have thus far failed to set in motion the process of decolonization of Puerto Rico,

Stressing the need for the United States to lay the groundwork for the full implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), and resolutions and decisions of the Special Committee concerning Puerto Rico,

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Taking into account the proposals to convene a sovereign Constituent Assembly of the people of Puerto Rico as part of the search for realistic procedures which would make it possible to launch the process of decolonization of Puerto Rico,

Aware that Vieques Island, Puerto Rico, has been used for over fifty years by the United States Marines to carry out military manoeuvres, thus limiting access by the civilian population to a space scarcely a quarter of the island, and having a negative impact on the health of the population, the environment and the economic and the social development of the Territory,

Regretting that, the Government of the United States has resumed its military manoeuvres and bombings on Vieques Island, which is inhabited, removing and incarcerating hundreds of peaceful demonstrators, including political personalities, and imposing further restrictions on the civilian population,

Noting the consensus among the people as well as in the Government of Puerto Rico on the urgency of halting military manoeuvres on Vieques Island and on the return of occupied land to the people of Puerto Rico,

Further noting the consensus among the people of Puerto Rico in favour of the release of all Puerto Rican prisoners who have been serving sentences in United States prisons on cases related to Puerto Rico's independence,

Recalling the release of eleven Puerto Rican political prisoners in 2000,

Further noting that the final document of the Thirteenth Ministerial Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Cartagena, Colombia on 8 and 9 April 2000,[1] reaffirms the right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence on the basis of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and requests the Special Committee to continue actively pursuing the issue of Puerto Rico,

Having heard statements and testimonies representative of various viewpoints among the people of Puerto Rico and their social institutions,

Having considered the report of the Rapporteur of the Special Committee on the implementation of the resolutions concerning Puerto Rico,[2]

1. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence in conformity with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and the applicability of the fundamental principles of that resolution to the question of Puerto Rico;

2. *Reiterates* that the Puerto Rican people constitute a Latin American and Caribbean nation that has its own and unequivocal national identity;

3. *Calls upon* the Government of the United States of America to assume its responsibility of expediting a process that will allow the Puerto Rican people to fully exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence, in conformity with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and the resolutions and decisions of the Special Committee concerning Puerto Rico;

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[1] A/54/917-S/2000/580, annex.

[2] A/AC.109/2001/L.3.

4. *Notes with satisfaction* that, during the past two years, progress has been achieved towards the implementation of a mechanism ensuring the full participation of representatives of all viewpoints prevailing in Puerto Rico, such as the proposals to convene a sovereign Constituent Assembly of the people of Puerto Rico;

5. *Reiterates its hope* that the General Assembly of the United Nations will give comprehensive consideration to the question of Puerto Rico in all its aspects;

6. *Urges* the Government of the United States, in line with the need to guarantee to the Puerto Rican people their legitimate right to self-determination and the protection of their human rights, to order the immediate halt of its armed forces' military drills and manoeuvres on Vieques Island, which is inhabited, return the occupied land to the people of Puerto Rico, halt the persecution, incarcerations, arrests and harassment of peaceful demonstrators, immediately release all persons incarcerated in this connection, respect fundamental human rights, such as the right to health and economic development, and decontaminate the impact areas;

7. *Requests* the President of the United States of America to release all Puerto Rican political prisoners serving sentences in United States prisons on cases related to the struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico;

8. *Notes with satisfaction* the report prepared by the Rapporteur of the Special Committee,[2] in compliance with its resolution of 12 July 2000;

9. *Requests* the Rapporteur to report to the Special Committee in the year 2002 on the implementation of the present resolution;

10. *Decides* to keep the question of Puerto Rico under continuous review.